

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1-11. (canceled)

12. (currently amended) A lancet, comprising:

a needle having a pointed tip;

a support body enclosing the needle such that the pointed tip projects beyond the end of the support body;
and

a removable guard located over the pointed tip of the needle, said guard having been integrally moulded from plastics material with said support body and connected thereto by a breakable neck portion;

said removable guard portion having an outer peripheral thickened region describing a generally U- or C-shape, a central region of thinner section and a further thickened region encasing the tip of the needle and being spaced from the adjacent ends of the peripheral thickened region such that there is a gap therebetween bridged only by said thinner section.

13. (previously presented) The lancet according to claim 12, wherein the guard is formed with a centrally

positioned hole close to the end of the guard remote from the needle point.

14. (previously presented) The lancet according to claim 12, wherein the guard is of generally tab-like form, with the thickened region forming arc-like portions on ~~the~~ two side edges of the guard which lead to the thinner section of plastics material adjacent to the needle tip.

15. (currently amended) A method of forming a lancet, comprising:

holding a needle in a mould formed to create a support body for holding the base portion of the needle and a removable guard about the pointed needle tip and to form a breakable neck portion between the support body and the guard, the mould having an entry point for plastics material, at the end of the guard remote from the needle point, leading to an outer ~~[[edge]]~~ peripheral thickened hollow region of generally U- or C-shape which in turn leads to a thinner hollow section approaching the needle tip and a further enlarged hollow region encasing ~~about~~ the needle, ~~[[tip]]~~ the further enlarged hollow region being spaced from adjacent ends of the peripheral thickened

hollow region to leave a gap therebetween that is bridged
by said thinner hollow section; and

injecting plastics material into the mould via
the entry point to create the guard about the needle tip.

16. (previously presented) The method according
to claim 15, wherein the plastics material flows around
both sides of a pin located close to said entry point
towards said edge thickened hollow region.

17. (previously presented) The lancet according
to claim 13, wherein the guard is of generally tab-like
form, with the thickened region forming arc-like portions
on two side edges of the guard which lead to the thinner
section of plastics material adjacent to the needle tip.